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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews three studies designed to assess the impact of gender-related terms. The first study examined 144 male and female undergraduate students' preferences for and performance on tasks using alternatives to the standard English forms, "his/hers" and "him/her." The second study attempted to replicate the original study and to prove that the more successful women were in performing the task, the more likely they were to dislike the text used in the varied pronoun conditions. The third study provided a longitudinal investigation to assess the effects of repeated exposure to alternative-gender pronouns. It was concluded from this series of studies that the use of a gender-related pronoun creates a mental image consistent with that pronoun, that the quality and enjoyment of written materials are not adversely affected by the use of alternative pronouns, that task performance is not hindered by pronoun variation, that positive feedback and negative feedback on tasks do not adversely affect appraisal of alternatives, that the self-esteem of an individual does not affect ratings of materials containing alternatives, and that repeated exposure to alternative pronouns increases the positive ratings of materials in which they are contained. (KS)

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ALTERNATIVES TO USING MASCULINE PRONOUNS WHEN REFERRING TO THE SPECIES

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Alternatives to Using Masculine Pronouns
When Referring to the Species

The word "man" is an ambiguous term. It means the species; it also means the male of the species. Writers, using the term "man" and the corresponding masculine pronouns, may intend for the reader to imagine both sexes. However, constant omission of the female gender often creates a mental image of the male species. This discriminative process contributes to the "nonconscious sexism" discussed by Sandra and Daryl Bem (1970). In addition, it may lead one to the inappropriate conclusion that, "all people are male until proven female." (Murrary, 1972).

This nonconscious, sexist practice suggests that there is a need to become aware of and sensitive to literary techniques which are inculcated as "proper use in formal writing". An example of the grammatical rule to use male pronouns when the antecedent refers to both sexes, or when the gender is unknown, is found in a frequently used college English handbook (Elsbree and Bracher, 1968):

> Singular pronouns with indefinite antecedent in formal writing--use a singular pronoun for each antecedent as each, either, neither, someone, somebody, anyone, everybody, no one, nobody, person, men, woman.
>
> Correct: Neither of the twins wished to show that his feelings were hurt.
>
> Correct: I think a person should mind his own business.

One of the more exaggerated examples of this discriminative process is found in a Psychology of Training Personnel textbook, (Mager and Beach, 1967). The textbook is used in upper division psychology courses attended by both men and women students.

> Between one and two months after a student has left your course and reported for a job, call him on the telephone. By this time, he will have run into most of the problems, if any, that will develop because of any weaknesses in his training. Ask him to tell you what sort of things he is doing and how often he does them. Ask him what problems he has run into and why. Ask him what he can do particularly well. In

> other words, perform a task analysis over the telephone. But ask him about the job, not about the course. You already know how well he reached each of the course objectives. What you are looking for is information about how well the objectives match the job. If he volunteers information about the course, accept it without comment and then ask him more questions about how well he is able to perform... .

The male pronoun is used fifteen times during this short passage. The occurrence of male pronouns on this page may be somewhat exaggerated, but it is not an exception; on page sixty-one, the male gender form is used sixteen times, on page seventy-three, it is used eighteen times.

The use of exclusionary terms referring to the male gender has recently been challenged. Obvious alternatives to this standard is to include both masculine and feminine terms: men and women, he/she, etc. This alternative can become awkward for both the writer and the reader, and may result in the second term being dropped. Innovative approaches to this dilemma have emerged in contemporary literature. An article discussing the detrimental effects of using only male pronouns (Cole, 1974), introduced three experimental terms integrating both male and female pronouns. "Se" was substituted for he/she; "hes" for his/her; and "hir" for him/her. Another experimental approach appearing in the literature (Miller and Swift, 1972) has devised new words which do not denote gender. "Tay" replaces he/she; "ter" replaces his/her; and "tem" is used instead of him/her. Other proponents of an egalitarian language have substituted gender-related pronouns with the words "co" and "cos" (Radical Therapist 1971; Repression or Revolution, 1973).

Thus far, the major emphasis has been placed on the writer's manipulation of gender-related terms. The next logical step of inquiry requires experimental testing for possible effects on the reader. Research on college students conducted by Kidd (1971) tested the effects of the traditional usage of the masculine pronoun and the generic term "man". Based on the results of this study, the author concluded that although these terms are intended to be inclusive, they are generally inter-

preted as referring to males only. In a second study on college students, Schneider and Hacker (1973) found further support that the generic term "man" fails to represent both sexes. The results of the Kidd(1971) and Schneider and Hacker (1973) studies were confirmed by Bem and Bem (1973) who employed high school seniors as subjects.

In a more recent study, Harrison (1975) tested the reader's reaction to varying gender-related presentations of the species. She examined the responses of 500 junior high school students to one of three surveys which depicted early persons as either "man," "humans," or "men and women". The students were presented with seven situations and asked to draw characters demonstrating each situation. They were also asked to give a contemporary first name to each character drawn, thus indicating to the experimenter the character's gender. The students of both sexes were consistent in drawing male figures when responding to the survey using "man" only. However, when the early persons were depicted as "humans" or "men and women," the students tended to be more egalitarian by including women in their drawings of the characters. These findings clearly suggest that when only masculine terms are used, the reader does not imagine both sexes of the species. However, when egalitarian terms are used, the reader's mental image encompasses women and men.

Two recent studies using preschoolers as subjects investigated children's reactions to the sex of story characters. Deutsch (1974) found that children of both sexes produced more accurate verbal responses when presented a story depicting same-sex characters. Could this be evidence that both males and females perform better when they are given the opportunity to identify with the characters in the story? And would they report to enjoy a story more under the same circumstances? Jennings (1975) dealt with the latter question in her study of sex-typing in children's stories. The children reported to prefer those stories that contained stereotyped sex roles appropriate to their own sex.

Caution should be employed when attempting to generalize the findings with children populations to adult populations. Therefore, Study 1 of this paper was designed to examine adult's performance on and preference for literary techniques which utilize alternatives to standard English. Another purpose of this research endeavor was to analyze the subjects' written responses to determine the influences of the character's sex, presented in an article. The final goal was to measure the subjects' judgment regarding the quality of writings that utilize the alternatives.

H_1: Both women and men subjects will perform better in those conditions which include reference to both sexes or their same sex, than in opposite sex reference conditions.

H_2: Both women and men subjects will have higher levels of enjoyment in same sex conditions than in opposite sex conditions.

H_3: Both women and men subjects will rate the quality of the essay higher under masculine gender conditions than under the other pronoun conditions.

H_4: Women subjects will use the pronouns in the female reference conditions more often than will the men subjects.

H_5: Both women and men subjects will use the pronoun in the male reference conditions more often than the pronouns in the other conditions.

METHOD

Subjects

A total of 144 undergraduate students, 72 men and 72 women, from a junior college and a state university served as subjects. They were enrolled in marriage and the family, introductory sociology, or communication courses, and participated in the study while attending regular class. The sizes of the classes ranged from approximately 20 to 40 students in each.

Procedure

The subjects were told that they were participating in a reading comprehension test designed to compare their performance on essay questions versus objective

questions. Each subject was randomly presented with one of six variations of a 175 word essay, which discussed the education and orientation of a clinical psychologist (Goldenberg, 1973).

The contents of the essay remained constant, but the use of the gender-related pronouns varied across conditions. In the first condition, the pronouns referring to the masculine gender were substituted with "tay" for he or she, "ter" for his or her, and "tem" for him or her. In the second condition, the masculine pronouns were substituted with "se" for he or she, "hes" for his or her, and "hir" for him or her. The third and fourth conditions used the combinations he/she and she/he respectively. The fifth condition, using only the masculine pronouns, presented the essay exactly as it appears in the textbook from which it was taken. The final condition reversed the standard pronoun usage by referring to only the female gender.

The subjects were instructed to read the essay and respond to the following essay question: "Use two or more paragraphs to describe the educational orientation that the student of clinical psychology undergoes, and its subsequent effect on the clinical psychologist's practice." The subjects' next task was to answer four T/F objective questions concerning the essay content. Following completion of the test, they responded to four rating scales, each 12 centimeters in length. On the first, second and third scale, they were requested to rate the quality of the essay, the quality of the objective questions and the quality of the essay question, respectively. The reason for having the subjects evaluate the objective and essay questions was to further delude them into believing the ostensible purpose of the study. The fourth scale was used to rate how much they enjoyed reading the essay.

The true purpose of the study was not discussed with the participants immediately following its completion. After all of the data was collected and

analyzed, full disclosure of the results was presented either verbally or in written form. However, to circumvent possible post-test anxiety experienced by the subjects, they were assured of complete anonymity.

RESULTS

The subjects' ratings of the essay's quality and their ratings of enjoyment, and finally their correctness of score were analyzed using two by six analyses of variance. The female and male subjects constituted the two levels of the first factor and the six pronoun conditions composed the six levels of the second factor.

Results for the analysis of variance analyzing the subjects' correctness of score was significant in the first factor, $F = 10.59$, $p < .001$ (see Table 2) and nonsignificant in the second factor. The women subjects scored significantly higher than the men. The interaction was not significant.

Results for the second analysis of variance on enjoyment showed a significant difference in the first factor, $F = 4.008$, $p < .05$ (see Table 1). The women subjects reported to enjoy the essay significantly more than the men subjects. Again, no significance was found regarding the second factor or for the interaction.

Results for the analysis of variance on quality found no significant differences in Factor 1 or Factor 2. No significant interaction was found.

In order to analyze hypotheses four and five, the subjects' responses to the essay questions were analyzed by assigning their pronoun usage to the following five categories:

(1) Consistent - Subjects used the same pronoun condition as was in the essay.

(2) Inconsistent but egalitarian - Subjects' use of pronouns was inconsistent with the pronoun condition of the essay, but referred to both sexes, i.e., he/she.

(3) Reverted - Subjects did not use the pronoun condition that was in the essay, but reverted to the standard usage of the masculine pronouns.

(4) Non-commital - Subjects used terms that did not denote gender, i.e., they.

(5) No response - Subjects failed to complete the essay question portion of the experiment.

The percentage of responses within the six pronoun conditions were as follows:

Condition 1 - Tay, Ter, Tem

	F	M
Consistent	8%	8%
Inconsistent but =	17%	8%
Reverted	17%	17%
Non-commital	50%	67%
No response	8%	0%

Condition 2 - Se, Hes, Hir

	F	M
Consistent	25%	17%
Inconsistent but =	0%	8%
Reverted	17%	17%
Non-commital	42%	50%
No response	17%	8%

Condition 3 - He/She

	F	M
Consistent	42%	17%
Inconsistent but =	17%	0%
Reverted	25%	25%
Non-commital	17%	42%
No response	0%	17%

Condition 4 - She/He

	F	M
Consistent	0%	0%
Inconsistent but =	42%	17%
Reverted	33%	25%
Non-commital	25%	42%
No response	0%	17%

Condition 5 - He

	F	M
Consistent	42%	58%
Inconsistent but =	17%	0%
Reverted	0%	0%
Non-commital	25%	33%
No response	17%	8%

Condition 6 - She

	F	M
Consistent	67%	25%
Inconsistent but =	0%	17%
Reverted	0%	8%
Non-commital	33%	33%
No response	0%	17%

Although correlational analysis was not preplanned, it was warranted by the failure of the planned analyses to explain some of the raw data's peculiarities. It appeared that a number of the women subjects who attained higher scores on the objective questions tended to downgrade the quality of the article and to enjoy it less. Therefore the data were then analyzed using Pearson product-moment correlations. First, the subjects' ratings of the article's quality was correlated with their number of correct responses on the objective questions. A negative

correlation coefficient, r = -.35, for women subjects produced a significant t ratio, t (70) = -3.11, $p < .01$. No significance was revealed for the men subjects. The second correlation compared the subjects' rating of enjoyment with their number of correct responses. Again a negative correlation, r = -.32, for the women subjects produced significance, t (70) = -2.82, $p < .01$. The correlation for the men subjects revealed no significance, ($t > .05$).

Since significance was found for the women subjects' ratings of quality of the article with their correctness of scores, and their enjoyment with score, further correlations were executed to determine if the negative correlations were a result of specific pronoun conditions. By grouping the six conditions into three related pairs, the analysis could be more detailed. The first pair consisted of the two novel pronoun conditions; i.e., "tay, ter, and tem" and "se, hes, and hir". The second pair combined the "he/she" and "he" conditions. The final pair included the "she/he" and "she" conditions.

Results for the pair of novel conditions correlating quality with score produced a negative correlation, r = -.54, and a significant t ratio, t (22) = -2.98, $p < .01$. The correlation of enjoyment with score was also significant, r = -.59, t (22) = -3.17, $p < .01$. The pair which consisted of the "he/she" and the "he" conditions showed no significance for either quality, r = .10 ($t > .05$), or enjoyment, r = .11 ($t > .05$).

Results for the "she/he" and "she" pair, correlating quality with score was significant, r = -.54, t (22) = -3.04, $p < .01$. The correlation of enjoyment with score was also significant, r = -.48, t (22) = -2.55, $p < .02$.

DISCUSSION

Although it was hypothesized that both men and women subjects would perform better in those conditions which referred to both sexes or their same sex, the

analysis of variance revealed that overall the women attained higher scores than the men regardless of the pronoun condition. Although this is not consistent with Deutsch's results with preschoolers, it is consistent with statistics on tests of verbal ability which reveal that women tend to attain higher scores on verbal tasks (Astin, 1971; American College Testing Program, 1966). Perhaps the adult women's higher performance can be attributed to continuous reinforcement of verbal skills. It appears that the variables presented in this experiment did not interfere markedly with the subjects' typical performance on reading comprehension tests.

The findings regarding enjoyment of the article did not confirm the expectations that both the men and women subjects would enjoy more those conditions that recognized only their same sex. Instead, the women subjects reported to enjoy the article more than the men across pronoun conditions. Since the women performed better than the men on the reading test, it seems reasonable that they would report higher enjoyment.

The prediction that subjects would rate the quality of the article higher when only the masculine gender was used was not supported. These findings suggest that authors need not be concerned with using alternative terms to refer to humankind. The subjects neither berated the quality of the article or reported to enjoy it less in any of the pronoun conditions.

The fourth hypothesis that the women subjects would use the pronoun in the female reference condition more than the men subjects was supported by the finding that 67% of the women subjects were consistent as compared to only 25% of the men subjects. Apparently the women subjects were more inclined to identify with this representation of the clinical psychologist and consequently were more amenable to using the female pronoun. Noteworthy is the fact that the women subjects were most consistent in the condition in which the clinical psychologist was depicted as a female. This suggests that the use of the female only pronouns tended to produce an exclusionary mental image.

The final hypothesis, that both women and men subjects would use the pronoun in the male reference condition more often than the pronouns in the other conditions, was confirmed regarding the men subjects and disconfirmed regarding the women subjects. The men subjects were most consistent in using the male pronoun in the standard English condition. In this condition, the men subjects used the male pronoun 58% of the time; the next highest percentage of consistency for the men subjects occurred in response to the female pronoun condition (25%). Contrarily, the women subjects used the male pronoun in the male reference condition 42% of the time as compared to using the female pronoun in the female reference condition 67% of the time.

The findings regarding the fourth and fifth hypotheses add credence to the allegation that pronouns restricted to one sex tend to produce a mental image reflecting only that sex. Further, these percentages suggest that both women and men subjects were more inclined to use pronouns depicting their same sex.

It is interesting to note that neither women or men subjects in the she/he condition were consistent. However, 42% of the women reversed the pronoun combination and 25% were non-commital; 17% of the men reversed the pronoun combination and 42% were non-commital. This indicates that their pronoun usage, though reversed or non-commital, still represented both sexes, thereby suggesting that their mental image of the clinical psychologist was not restricted to a male. If people do think of both sexes when only masculine pronouns are used, then a larger percentage of the subjects would have reverted to using the standard English form.

The relatively small percentage of subjects who reverted to using exclusionary masculine pronouns implies that the alternative generic pronouns presented in this study influenced the reader's mental image of the character's sex.

The analysis of the essay responses revealed that across all conditions, over one-third of the subjects neglected to indicate the sex of the character. Instead, they referred to the clinical psychologist by using either plural pronouns or nouns with no gender reference. The subjects' use of plural pronouns was especially

interesting since the article used only singular pronouns. Apparently, the subjects did not want to commit themselves, particularly in those conditions that presented non-conventional alternatives. The authors of this paper contend that the use of plural and non-gender denoting pronouns reflects egalitarianism since neither sex is excluded.

The results of the correlational analysis were perplexing. The better the women subjects performed on the objective test, the more likely they were to downgrade the article's quality. A similar relationship occurred with the women subjects' reported enjoyment. Could it be that women are more inclined than men to underestimate their abilities? This explanation, though appealingly simple, is not satisfactory for two important reasons. First, it does not explain the inverse relationship between the women's scores and their degree of enjoyment. Second and most noteworthy, it falls short of explaining why this phenomenon prevailed in the first (tay, etc.), second (se, etc.), fourth (she/he), and sixth (she) conditions, and failed to show up in the pairing of conditions three (he/she) and five (he).

Perhaps Matina Horner's (1972) theory of "women's motive to avoid success" can elucidate these serendipitous developments. Since the first and second conditions clearly specified that both sexes were represented and the fourth and sixth conditions placed women in the prominent position, perhaps the women subjects equated female representation with success. Conversely, because conditions three and five either excluded females or placed males in the prominent position, the women did not perceive the female in the successful role. Assuming that the "motive to avoid success" exists, and considering that mental images of successful women were encouraged by the terms in conditions one, two, four and six, it seems reasonable that the more successful the women subjects' performances, the more need they had for downgrading and disliking the article. This behavior seems to be a convenient way for the higher performing women subjects to display this defeating motive.

Reiteration of the fact that the women scored significantly better than the men is important, since this result implies that the variation of terms did not hinder the women's performance. Apparently, the women's well-established status as higher performers on verbal tests was not susceptible to the "motive to avoid success". This result should alleviate some of the misgivings that test developers might have regarding the effect of alternative terms on performance.

SUMMARY

The results of Study 1 suggest that pronoun usage denoting sex creates a mental image consistent with that gender-related pronoun. These results also indicate that the quality and enjoyment of written materials are not adversely affected by the use of alternative pronouns. Additionally, performance is apparently not hindered by these variations. Further research could be directed in three areas: (1) The article's content could be varied to include non-academic literature; (2) A longitudinal investigation could be designed to test continuous exposure to the alternative forms; and (3) An experiment focusing specifically on the interaction between women's performance and their appraisal and enjoyment of written material that uses non-conventional pronouns could be conducted.

STUDY 2

Given the tenuous correlational finding of Study 1, examination of the possible interaction between women's performance and their responses to non-conventional pronouns was seen as the next logical step for research. Therefore, Study 2 was an attempt to replicate the original findings and to elucidate the finding that the more successful the women were in performing the task the more likely they were to downgrade and dislike the article in the she, she/he, and experimental pronoun conditions. It was assumed that experimentally manipulating the success or failure of the woman subject would test if the motive to avoid success was operating in the given conditions. The

manipulation consisted of giving the subjects either positive or negative feedback concerning their performance on the objective questions.

Research on personality feedback has shown that subjects tend to believe the feedback given them regardless of their actual performance, and are unable to discriminate between authentic and erroneous feedback (Dies, 1972). Other feedback studies have demonstrated that subjects who receive negative appraisals of their work are more inclined to derogate the source than are those subjects who receive positive feedback (Freeman, 1973). In addition, when subjects are told that they have performed successfully on a task, they are more likely to attribute their success to internal rather than external factors. Conversely, external factors are seen as causes by subjects who are told they had performed unsuccessfully (Sobel, 1974). The hypotheses for the feedback manipulation in Study 2 were based on the consistent findings of feedback research, rather than on the serendipitous finding in Study 1.

H_1: Subjects who receive negative feedback will rate the quality of the essay less than will the recipients of positive feedback.

H_2: Subjects who receive negative feedback will rate the quality of the objective questions less than will the recipients of positive feedback.

H_3: Subjects who receive negative feedback will report to enjoy the essay less than will subjects who receive positive feedback.

Replication of the results of Study 1 concerning the pronoun manipulations and the women subjects' usage of pronouns was expected. Therefore, the following outcomes were hypothesized:

H_4: Subjects' ratings of the quality of the essay, the objective questions, and their reported enjoyment will not be differentially affected by the pronoun conditions.

H_5: Subjects will be more consistent in the female reference and male reference conditions than in the other pronoun conditions.

H_6: Subjects will be more egalitarian in those conditions which include reference to both sexes than in the female only or male only pronoun conditions.

METHOD

Subjects

One hundred female undergraduate students at a state university served as subjects. A portion of the subjects received course work credit for participating, and the remaining subjects volunteered to participate.

Procedure

Subjects in various group sizes ranging from three to ten were informed by a female experimenter that the present study was testing the effects of objective vs. essay questions on reading comprehension tests. The subjects were informed at the onset of the experiment of each task which would be expected of them.

Subjects were told that they would be expected to read a one paragraph essay discussing the training and orientation of a clinical psychologist (Goldenberg, 1973). The subjects read one of five forms of the essay which were identical in all aspects except for the type of gender pronouns used. In the first condition, the clinical psychologist was depicted as a female (she, her). The clinical psychologist was depicted as both a female and a male in the second condition, with the female always represented first (she/he, etc.). The traditional usage of the masculine pronoun constituted the third condition. Again a combination of the gender-related pronouns was used in the fourth condition, except the masculine term preceeded the feminine term (he/she, etc.). In the fifth condition, the newly devised pronouns co and cos, which represent both sexes equally, were tested. Each subject was randomly assigned to one of the above five conditions.

Attached to the essay given to each subject was a form containing four True/False objective questions. The subjects were instructed to answer the questions and then indicate to the experimenter when they had completed the task. The experimenter then picked up the four objective questions and pretended to evaluate them. The subjects were then given a folded slip of paper which read either "Excellent" or "Failed". This positive or negative feedback was randomly predetermined by a person other than

the experimenter, thus preventing the experimenter from knowing which subject received which type of feedback. After the subjects had the opportunity to view their results, they were given two additional forms to complete. The first asked them to respond to the same essay question used in Study 1. On the second form, they were asked to rate on a twelve centimeter scale the quality of the essay, the quality of the objective questions, the quality of the essay question, and finally the degree to which they enjoyed reading the essay. The ratings of the quality of the essay question were requested to make the cover story more believable.

At the conclusion of the study, the subjects were immediately assured that the experimenter's evaluation of their performance on the objective questions was erroneous. This action was taken to reduce any anxiety that the subjects could have experienced as a result of the negative feedback. The subjects appeared to be relieved once they realized that their actual performance was not downgraded.

At the completion of the experiment, the true nature of the study was explained to the subjects in detail, and previous research was cited. The experimenter probed for suspicion on the part of the subjects regarding the experimental pronoun manipulations. The results of the inquiry indicated that subjects did not suspect that the pronouns used in the form of the essay were of any consequence. However a few subjects questioned the authencity of the failure feedback when they believed they had performed the task successfully. They hypothesized that the experimenter was interested in assessing their performance on the essay question after they had been told they had failed on the objective questions. Open discussion regarding the topic of the experiment was encouraged.

RESULTS

The subjects' ratings of the essay's quality, the objective questions' quality, and their ratings of enjoyment, and finally their correctness of score were analyzed using two by five analyses of variance. The negative and positive feedback manipulations

composed the two levels of the first factor, and the five pronoun manipulations constituted the five levels of the second factor. The results of the analysis of variance performed on the subject's ratings of the quality of the essay revealed no significant differences.

The results of the analysis of variance on subjects' ratings of the quality of the objective questions yielded a significant main effect for Factor A (positive vs. negative feedback) $F = 36.02$, $p < .001$ (see Table 3). Subjects receiving negative feedback rated the quality of the objective questions significantly lower than those subjects receiving positive feedback. There were no other significant outcomes.

Similarly, the analysis of variance conducted on the data obtained from the subjects' reported enjoyment produced a significant main effect for Factor A (positive vs. negative feedback) $F = 11.20$, $p < .005$ (see Table 4). Enjoyment was rated significantly higher by subjects receiving positive feedback compared to subjects receiving negative feedback. Again, no other significant differences were obtained.

The final analysis of variance which tested the subjects' actual performance on the objective questions produced no significant differences. This indicates that random assignment had been accomplished.

The subjects' responses to the essay question were analyzed by the same procedure used in Study 1. The percentage of responses within the five pronoun conditions were as follows:

Condition 1 - She

	-	+
Consistent	70%	30%
Inconsistent but =	0%	20%
Reverted	0%	0%
Non-commital	30%	50%
No response	0%	0%

Condition 2 - She/he

	-	+
Consistent	0%	20%
Inconsistent but =	20%	30%
Reverted	50%	30%
Non-commital	20%	20%
No response	10%	0%

Condition 3 - He

	-	+
Consistent	70%	80%
Inconsistent but =	0%	10%
Reverted	0%	0%
Non-commital	30%	10%
No response	0%	0%

Condition 4 - He/she

	-	+
Consistent	20%	30%
Inconsistent but =	10%	10%
Reverted	20%	40%
Non-commital	50%	20%
No response	0%	0%

Condition 5 - Co

	-	+
Consistent	40%	10%
Inconsistent but =	10%	20%
Reverted	20%	40%
Non-commital	30%	30%
No response	0%	0%

DISCUSSION

The nonsignificant finding regarding the subjects' ratings of the essay's quality does not confirm the first hypothesis. This suggests that since the subjects had the opportunity to evaluate the actual task upon which they had been told they failed or succeeded (objective questions), there was no need for them to downgrade or upgrade the quality of the essay itself.

The results from the analysis of variance on the subjects' evaluations of the quality of the objective questions and their enjoyment of reading the essay confirm hypotheses two and three. Recipients of positive feedback rated the objective questions much higher and reported more enjoyment than those subjects given negative feedback. The subjects' ratings of the objective questions' quality substantiates previous feedback research. The subjects tended to believe erroneous evaluations (Dies, 1972), and were inclined to derogate the source of the negative appraisals (Freeman, 1973). Additionally, it appears that in the present study, the subjects who received negative feedback attributed their failure to an external cause by downgrading the objective questions. Likewise, the recipients of positive feedback internalized their success. Thus, Sobel's (1974) findings were replicated.

The data obtained from the subjects' ratings of enjoyment suggest that persons are likely to report lower levels of enjoyment when told that they had failed on a related task. Similarly, persons who have been told they performed successfully on a task are more likely to express higher levels of enjoyment.

The consistent nonsignificant findings regarding the pronoun manipulations support the fourth hypothesis. Clearly the subjects' ratings of the essay and objective questions' quality and their reported enjoyment were not differentially affected by the alternate pronoun forms. The results of Study 1 were therefore replicated with respect to the pronoun variations.

By submitting the subjects' actual scores on the objective questions to an analysis of variance, a check on the random assignment to experimental conditions was tested. Since the subjects performed approximately the same across conditions, random assignment was achieved.

The percentages obtained from subjects' pronoun usage in response to the essay question confirmed the hypothesis that subjects would be more consistent in the female reference and male reference conditions than in the other pronoun conditions. When the percentage of subjects' responses in both feedback conditions were pooled, it could be seen that half of the women in the female-only pronoun condition were consistent. The other half of the women included both sexes in their reference to the clinical psychologist by being either non-commital or inconsistent but egalitarian. Most noteworthy is the fact that none of the women reverted to using the traditional "he" pronouns.

Again by combining the percentages of responses of both feedback conditions, the tendency for subjects to be consistent in the male only pronoun condition is quite evident. Seventy-five percent of the subjects included only male terms when referring to the clinical psychologist compared to only 25% who utilized terms which included reference to both sexes. Indeed, the subjects used the female-only and male-only pronouns more often than the other pronouns.

The percentages obtained from the female-only and male-only pronoun conditions suggest that when the clinical psychologist was portrayed as a woman rather than a

man, there was a greater tendency for the subjects to envision both sexes. Apparently, the non-traditional female-only pronouns were more likely to create a mental image which included both males and females than were the male-only pronouns. Since the use of masculine pronouns has predominated in the English language, this phenomenon seems reasonable.

The subjects' responses to the essay question in the she/he, he/she, and co pronoun conditions confirm the final hypothesis that subjects would be more egalitarian in those conditions which include reference to both sexes, than in the female reference or male reference conditions. The fact that approximately 65% of the subjects used egalitarian terms, and only about 35% of the subjects reverted to standard English, indicates that the pronoun combinations enhanced an inclusionary mental image of the clinical psychologist. These findings again support the contention that pronouns restricted to only sex produce an exclusionary mental image.

Since the effects of the feedback manipulations replicated previous feedback research rather than confirmed the serendipitous finding of Study 1, it is concluded that the "motive to avoid success" was not instrumental in the women's evaluations. Therefore, the combination of successful feedback and the pronoun conditions she, she/he, and the experimental pronouns apparently did not induce the women to display fear of success.

Based on the results of Study 1 and 2, the authors contend that the use of egalitarian language does not interfere with one's performance on reading comprehension tests. Additionally, the degree of enjoyment reported by readers is not differentially affected by alternative pronouns. It is hoped that the findings of this investigation will encourage test developers, authors, and educators in general to utilize an inclusionary language. Perhaps through such action, the "non-conscious sexism" (Bem and Bem, 1970) which exists in the English language would be mitigated.

STUDY 3

The primary purpose of Study 3 was to design a longitudinal investigation to test repeated exposure to alternative gender pronouns. By utilizing a longitudinal methodology, a more accurate assessment of a person's reactions to non-traditional language is anticipated. This repeated exposure would enable the subjects to become more familiar with the novel terms. The secondary concern was to assess the effects of individuals' self-esteem on their appraisal of pronoun variations.

Previous research in the area of self-esteem has tested Rokeach's (1960) hypothesis that dogmatism and one's feelings of self-inadequacy are interrelated. In a study conducted by Larsen and Schwendiman (1969) Form E of Rokeach's dogmatism scale and three self-esteem inventories were employed to test Rokeach's hypothesis. By performing correlational analyses, a negative relationship between dogmatism and self-esteem resulted. Additionally, subjects low in self-esteem tended to display both a high degree of authoritarianism and insecurity. In a more recent study conducted by Hess and Lindner (1974), which employed Rokeach's dogmatism measures, a reliable negative relationship was again supported.

Given the consistent relationships among these variables, it is perhaps possible that generic pronoun variations may appear threatening to persons of low self-esteem. Conversely, individuals of moderate or high self-esteem may be amenable to the presentation of such pronoun variations.

H_1: Women and men subjects with high and moderate self-esteem will rate the quality of the questions using egalitarian pronouns higher than subjects with low self-esteem

H_2: Women and men subjects will rate the quality of questions using egalitarian pronouns higher on the second rating than on the first rating.

METHOD

Subjects

168 students enrolled in introductory communication studies courses at a state university comprised the initial student population. At the conclusion of the study, a total of 69 subjects completed all of the necessary materials. The study was conducted over an entire school semester.

Procedure

168 students were given a version of Coopersmith's self-esteem inventory as modified by Morse and Gergen (1970) at the first class meeting by their instructor. They were told that the instructor was investigating the validity of the self-esteem test instrument.

The instructor proceeded to conduct the class agenda in his normal fashion. All students attempting to earn a C grade were instructed to take ten short-answer tests on the required textbook (An Introduction to Interpersonal Communication, McCroskey, Larson and Knapp, 1971). Students desiring an A or B grade were given the option to read and take examinations on an additional book. Each student was allowed to complete the required assignments at her/his own pace. Students were given the opportunity to retake each test until they successfully passed it. Their test performances were evaluated on a pass/fail basis.

The test questions derived from the required textbook were manipulated regarding the gender pronouns used and other sex-denoting references. No manipulations were executed on the optional reading and testing materials. Prior to each test, students were administered a study guide from which the final short-answer test questions were derived. The questions on the final test forms were worded exactly as they appeared on the study guides. Since students were permitted to retake the tests if necessary, two forms of each test were devised.

The ten tests included four gender-related pronoun manipulations. These manipulations were as follows:

1. SHE - Test questions alluding to gender included reference to females only.
2. SHE/HE - Any reference to gender placed the female first.
3. HE - Test questions alluding to gender included reference to males only.
4. HE/SHE - Any reference to gender placed the male first.

Each test form contained at least one and no more than three manipulations of gender reference. Tests 1 and 10 contained no pronoun references. The all female references were used in tests 5 and 8. The she/he combination appeared on tests 2 and 6. The gender combination with males first was seen in tests 3 and 7. The standard male-only condition was used on tests 4 and 9.

Following the student's completion of test 3, the instructor asked the students to rate the quality of a selection of the test questions. All questions manipulated in tests 2 and 3, plus a random selection of the remaining questions, appeared on the first rating form. Each question was rated on a scale twelve centimeters in length. A rating of zero indicated poor quality and a rating of twelve indicated excellent quality. This procedure was repeated once after tests 4, 5, 6 and 7 and then again after tests 8, 9, and 10. The instructor concealed the true purpose of the ratings by telling the students that he planned to use the results to revise any test questions if necessary. The instructor was not informed of the specific hypotheses developed by the authors regarding the present study. Additionally, the authors had no contact with the subjects throughout the entire study.

The reduction in the subject population was due to extraneous variables such as drop-out rate and failure of students to complete tests and rating forms. The 69 subjects who completed the tasks were informed by mail of their participation in

the experiment. A brief summary of the purpose of the investigation and subsequent findings was provided. They were also invited to contact the researchers if they so desired.

RESULTS

The data were analyzed using a three way analysis of variance with repeated measures in two factors. The first factor, self-esteem, consisted of three levels, high, moderate and low. The second factor consisted of the first exposure (time 1) and the second exposure (time 2) to the four pronoun types. The four pronoun conditions constituted the four levels of the third factor.

The results for the first factor (self-esteem) produced no significant differences. The three levels of self-esteem did not appear to have a significant affect on the subjects' ratings of the questions.

The results for factor 2 (time 1 and time 2) yielded a significant main effect, $F = 6.67$, $p < .025$ (see Table 5). Overall, the subjects' ratings of questions increased over time.

A significant main effect was found for the third factor (pronoun variation) $F = 3.40$, $p < .025$. The subjects' ratings of the questions differed across pronoun conditions. To detect where the differences were, a Tukey multiple comparison test was performed. Overall, the she/he condition was found to be rated significantly different from the she condition ($Q = 4.21$, $p < .05$) and significantly different from the he condition ($Q = 3.59$, $p < .05$).

Although the means for the he/she condition did not differ significantly from the she or he pronoun conditions, in both cases the he/she mean was higher (see Table 6). Therefore, the Schefe multiple comparison test was performed in order

to compare the means from the egalitarian conditions with those from the exclusionary conditions. By combining the mean of the she/he with the he/she condition mean and the mean of the she with the mean of the he condition, a marginal significance resulted ($F = 2.68$, $p < .10$). Overall, the egalitarian pronouns were rated higher than the non-egalitarian pronouns.

A significant time X pronoun interaction was also found, $F = 4.29$, $p < .01$. To determine which levels of the conditions contributed to the interactions, tests for simple effects (Keppel, 1973, pp. 430-433) were employed. The locus of variation was shown to be due to the increase in ratings over time in the he/she ($F = 12.91$, $p < .001$) and he ($F = 4.55$, $p < .05$) pronoun conditions.

DISCUSSION

The results for the self-esteem main effect disconfirmed hypothesis 1. Subjects with high and moderate self-esteem did not rate the quality of the questions using alternative pronouns higher than subjects with low self-esteem. These findings suggest that self-esteem is not involved in an individual's acceptance of non-traditional language. The usage of the alternative pronouns was apparently no more threatening to low self-esteem individuals than to high or moderate self-esteem individuals.

Regarding the significant main effect for time, it was found that the second exposure did produce higher ratings of the questions than the first exposure. The second significant effect regarding pronoun usage indicates that the questions containing the pronouns were rated differently. However, the multiple comparison tests revealed that the she/he as well as the he/she combinations were rated higher than the exclusionary he and she conditions.

The results of the tests for simple effects confirm hypothesis 2 which predicted an interaction between time and pronoun. The questions containing egalitarian pronouns were rated higher in quality on the second rating. This supports the contention that repeated exposure to inclusionary pronouns will enhance their acceptability. Thus, the third study's introduction of the time variable produced the only significant difference in ratings of alternative pronouns found in the present series of studies.

CONCLUSIONS

Given the results obtained from this series of studies, it is concluded that:

1. Pronoun usage denoting sex creates a mental image consistent with that gender-related pronoun.
2. The quality and enjoyment of written materials are not adversely affected by the use of alternative pronouns.
3. Performance is apparently not hindered by the pronoun variations.
4. Positive and negative feedback do not adversely affect the appraisal of alternative pronouns.
5. The self-esteem of an individual does not interfere with ratings of materials containing alternative pronouns.
6. Repeated exposure to alternative pronouns increases the ratings of materials in which they are contained.

Current attempts at promoting an inclusionary language are being made in various segments of society. Evidence of this is most dramatic within the field of education. Beginning, intermediate and advanced textbooks are being revised to eliminate sexism in actual language usage and in visual portrayals. A noteworthy example is found in a textbook which discusses a traditionally conservative area of study. Selltiz, Wrightsman and Cook in the preface of their book, Research Methods in Social Relations (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976), state, "... we have tried to eliminate the use of sexist language in this revision." Additionally, the authors maintain that sexism should be eliminated in the research process. Means of accomplishing this goal are proposed in the recent revisions of the American Psychological Association Guidelines (1975).

It is hoped that the continuance of existing language reformation and elimination of sexism in the educational system would result in a reduction of the sexist ideology which has prevailed in contemporary society.

TABLE 1, STUDY 1
Ratings of Subjects' Enjoyment
Summary of Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
A (sex of subject)	50.11	1	50.11	4.008	<.05
B (pronoun condition)	25.93	5	5.19	<1	ns
A X B	30.76	5	6.15	<1	ns
Within Groups	1,649.91	132	12.50		
Total	1,756.71	143			

TABLE 2, STUDY 1
Subjects' Correctness of Scores
Summary of Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
A (sex of subject)	5.67	1	5.67	10.59	<.001
B (pronoun condition)	2.37	5	.47	<1	ns
A X B	5.90	5	1.18	2.20	ns
Within Groups	70.67	132	.54		
Total	84.61	143			

TABLE 3, STUDY 2
Ratings of Subjects' Enjoyment
Summary of Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
A (positive vs. negative feedback)	122.32	1	122.32	11.20	.005
B (pronoun condition)	35.71	4	8.93	<1	ns
A X B	53.74	4	13.43	1.22	ns
Within Groups	933.28	90	10.92		
Total	1,195.05	99			

TABLE 4, STUDY 2
Ratings of Quality of Objective Questions
Summary of Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
A (positive vs. negative feedback)	255.05	1	255.05	36.02	$<.001$
B (pronoun condition)	10.19	4	2.55	<1	ns
A X B	30.90	4	7.72	1.09	ns
Within Groups	638.05	90	7.08		
Total	934.19	99			

TABLE 5, STUDY 3
Ratings of Quality of Test Questions
Summary of Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Subjects	930.92	68	--		
Groups	22.00	2	11.00	1	ns
$Error_b$	908.92	66	13.77		
Within Subjects	1,428.70	483			
Time	24.68	1	24.68	6.67	.025
Pronoun	30.00	3	10.00	3.40	.025
Group x Time	14.25	2	7.13	1.93	ns
Group x pronoun	33.88	6	5.65	1.92	ns
Time x pronoun	28.43	3	9.48	4.29	.01
Gr. x time x pronoun	11.37	6	1.90	1	ns
Error 1	244.31	66	3.70		
Error 2	582.08	198	2.94		
Error 3	437.70	198	2.21		

TABLE 6, STUDY 3
Means of Ratings

Pronoun	Time 1	Time 2
She/He	8.10	8.35
He/She	7.39	8.38
She	7.73	7.51
He	7.38	8.04

Pronoun	
She/He	8.23
He/She	7.89
She	7.62
He	7.71

Time	
Time 1	7.65
Time 2	8.07

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